

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An installation comprising:
a worktop ~~such as a conveyor;~~
a first wall; and
a device {100} for the close protection of products arranged on the worktop {12}, which are sensitive to contamination from the ambient environment, by diffusion of a sterile air stream in a direction substantially perpendicular or parallel to said worktop, said device extending along said worktop and having at least one end adjoining the first wall {10} so that there is an air gap {1} between said end and said first wall,

~~characterized in that~~ wherein said end is formed by a porous second wall made of a perforated material, extending substantially perpendicularly to ~~the~~ a longitudinal axis {X} of said device, in such a way as to create in said air gap {1} a sterile air leakage directed outward away from the worktop {12}, ~~this~~ the sterile air leakage countering any ambient air induction into said air gap toward said worktop.

2. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said first wall {10} is a machine outlet wall provided with an aperture opening onto the worktop.

3. (Currently Amended) The ~~device~~ installation as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said first wall is an end wall of another similar device with which it forms a set of devices for the close protection of products arranged on a worktop of large length, which are sensitive to the contamination conveyed by the ambient environment, said devices being abutted without mechanical fixing therebetween.

4. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 3, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said first wall is a porous wall made of a perforated material through which is created a sterile air leakage directed outward away from said worktop.

5. (Currently Amended) The device as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that it comprises~~ further comprising at least one sheath ~~(101, 102, 103)~~ made of a flexible material diffusing a sterile air stream in a vertical direction substantially perpendicular to said worktop (12), said sheath being formed of a quasi-leaktight upper wall and of a porous lower wall made of a perforated flexible material, extending longitudinally along the axis (X) of the sheath and delimiting between them a sterile air supply duct, and said end of the sheath being formed by a porous wall made of a perforated flexible material.

6. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim ~~5~~ 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said end wall and the porous lower longitudinal wall of the sheath are made from a material of like porosity.

7. (Currently Amended) The ~~device~~ installation as claimed in claim ~~5~~ 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the perforated flexible material constituting the porous lower longitudinal wall and said end wall of the sheath is a synthetic fabric ~~such as a polypropylene or polyester fabric~~.

8. (Currently Amended) The ~~device~~ installation as claimed in claim ~~5~~ 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein each longitudinal edge of the quasi-leaktight upper longitudinal wall of said sheath is continued by ~~a skirt (104, 105)~~ skirts which ~~extends~~ extend vertically toward the worktop ~~(12)~~ and which constitutes ~~a means~~ the means of diffusion of sterile air at high velocity relative to the porous lower longitudinal wall of the sheath which diffuses the sterile air at low velocity.

9. (Currently Amended) The ~~device~~ installation as claimed in claim 5, ~~characterized in that it comprises~~ further comprising a plurality of sheaths ~~{101, 102, 103}~~ made of a flexible material, juxtaposed so that their axes (X) are parallel and arranged in one and the same plane parallel to the worktop, said sheaths ~~{101, 102, 103}~~ covering the entire width of said worktop ~~{12}~~.

10. (Currently Amended) The ~~device~~ installation as claimed in claim 9, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the external longitudinal edge of the quasi-leaktight upper wall of the sheath ~~{101, 103}~~ situated at each end of the juxtaposition of sheaths, is continued by ~~a skirt {104, 105}~~ skirts which ~~extends~~ extend vertically toward the worktop (12) and which ~~constitutes~~ constitute a means of diffusion of sterile air at high velocity relative to the porous lower walls of said sheaths which diffuse the sterile air of low velocity.

11. (Currently Amended) The device as claimed in claim 8, characterized in that the ~~two skirts {104, 105}~~ are of the same length and extend up to the immediate proximity of the worktop.

12. (Currently Amended) The ~~device~~ installation as claimed in claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the at least two skirts ~~{104, 105}~~ have different lengths, a long skirt ~~{104}~~ whose length is approximately equal to the height allowed for between the axis of the sheath and the worktop and a short skirt ~~{105}~~ whose length is approximately equal to half the length of the long skirt.

13. (Currently Amended) The ~~device {200}~~ installation as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that it comprises~~ further comprising at least one ventilation nozzle ~~{201}~~ arranged on a longitudinal edge of said worktop ~~{12}~~ and able to produce directed toward said products a sterile air stream in a horizontal general direction substantially parallel to said worktop, said ventilation nozzle ~~{201}~~ comprising at its outlet an air diffuser ~~{202}~~ made of a perforated material

provided with upper and lower parts which produce an anti-inductive air flow whose velocity of diffusion exhibits a component normal to the worktop, ~~said an end (201a, 201b)~~ of said ventilation nozzle being formed by a wall made of a perforated material.

14. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim ~~13~~ 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said end wall ~~(201a, 201b)~~ of the ventilation nozzle and the upper part ~~(202a)~~ and lower part ~~(202b)~~ of the air diffuser ~~(202)~~ are made from a perforated sheet of like porosity.

15. (Currently Amended) The ~~device~~ installation as claimed in claim ~~13~~ 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the ventilation nozzle comprises at the level of said porous end ~~(201b)~~, on its upper surface extending horizontally up to its outlet, a strip ~~(201e)~~ of perforated material forming a sterile air flow directed essentially vertically away from the worktop.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) An ~~assembly~~ installation comprising:

a worktop;

a first wall; and

a device for the close protection of products arranged on a the worktop such as a conveyor, which are sensitive to the contamination conveyed by the ambient environment, characterized in that it comprises an installation (100) according to claim 12 and at an extremity of said device, by diffusion of a sterile air stream in a direction substantially perpendicular or parallel to said worktop, said device extending along said worktop and having at least one end adjoining the first wall so that there is an air gap between said end and said first wall,

wherein said end is formed by a porous second wall made of a perforated material, extending substantially perpendicularly to a longitudinal axis of said device, in such a way as to create in said air gap a sterile air leakage directed

outward away from the worktop, the sterile air leakage countering any ambient air induction into said air gap toward said worktop,

at least one sheath made of a flexible material diffusing a sterile air stream in a vertical direction substantially perpendicular to said worktop, said sheath being formed of a quasi-leaktight upper wall and of a porous lower wall made of a perforated flexible material, extending longitudinally along an axis of said sheath and delimiting between them a sterile air supply duct, and said end of said sheath being formed by a porous wall made of a perforated flexible material;

at least two skirts which extend vertically toward the worktop and which constitute a means of diffusion of sterile air at high velocity relative to the porous lower longitudinal wall of said sheath which diffuses the sterile air at low velocity;

at least one ventilation nozzle ~~{201}~~ arranged on a longitudinal edge of said worktop, able to produce directed toward said products a sterile air stream in a horizontal general direction substantially parallel to said worktop, said ventilation nozzle comprising at its outlet an air diffuser made of perforated material comprising upper and lower parts which produce an anti-inductive air flow whose velocity of diffusion exhibits a component normal to the worktop, said device furthermore comprising at the junction with said ventilation nozzle a vertical end skirt extending in a plane perpendicular to the planes of the lateral skirts of said sheath, directed toward said worktop up to a determined distance therefrom so as to permit the passage of said products under said end skirt; and

a vertical end skirt disposed at a junction with said ventilation nozzle and extending in a plane perpendicular to the planes of the at least two skirts, said vertical end skirt directed toward said worktop up to a determined distance therefrom so as to permit the passage of said products under said vertical end skirt,

wherein each longitudinal end of the quasi-leaktight upper longitudinal wall of said sheath is constituted by a corresponding one of said at least two skirts, and

wherein the at least two skirts have different lengths, a long skirt whose length is approximately equal to the height allowed for between the axis of the sheath and the worktop and a short skirt whose length is approximately equal to half the length of the long skirt.

18. (Currently Amended) The ~~device~~ installation as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that it comprises~~ further comprising: a cubicle ~~{300}~~ positioned above the worktop ~~{12}~~, supplied with sterile air and having a porous lower wall ~~{301}~~ for diffusing sterile air in a vertical direction substantially perpendicular to the worktop ~~{12}~~, said porous wall being made of perforated sheet and exhibiting a profile such that it ensures central diffusion of sterile air at low velocity bordered on each side by a diffusion of sterile air at high velocity, said end of the cubicle being formed by a wall comprising at least one porous zone ~~{302}~~ made of a perforated material extending over the entire width of said cubicle and rising from the lower edge of said cubicle to a certain determined height.

19. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 18, ~~characterized in that said~~ wherein said height is of the order of 25 mm.

20. (Newly Added) An installation comprising:
a worktop;
a first wall;
a device for the close protection of products arranged on the worktop, which are sensitive to contamination from the ambient environment, by diffusion of a sterile air stream in a direction substantially perpendicular or parallel to said worktop, said device extending along said worktop and having at least one end adjoining the first wall so that there is an air gap between said end and said first wall;

at least two skirts which extend vertically toward the worktop and which constitute a means of diffusion of sterile air at high velocity relative to the porous lower longitudinal wall of said sheath which diffuses the sterile air at low velocity;

at least one ventilation nozzle arranged on a longitudinal edge of said worktop, able to produce directed toward said products a sterile air stream in a horizontal general direction substantially parallel to said worktop, said ventilation nozzle including at its outlet an air diffuser made of perforated material comprising upper and lower parts which produce an anti-inductive air flow whose velocity of diffusion exhibits a component normal to said worktop, said ventilation nozzle being disposed at an extremity of said device; and

a vertical end skirt disposed at a junction with said ventilation nozzle and extending in a plane perpendicular to the planes of the at least two skirts, said vertical end skirt directed toward said worktop up to a determined distance therefrom so as to permit the passage of said products under said vertical end skirt.

21. (Newly Added) An installation comprising:

a worktop;

a first wall; and

a device for the close protection of products arranged on the worktop, which are sensitive to contamination from the ambient environment, by diffusion of a sterile air stream in a direction substantially perpendicular or parallel to said worktop, said device extending along said worktop and having at least one end adjoining the first wall so that there is an air gap between said end and said first wall,

wherein said end is formed by a porous second wall made of a perforated material, extending substantially perpendicularly to a longitudinal axis of said device, in such a way as to create in said air gap a sterile air leakage directed outward away from the worktop, the sterile air leakage countering any ambient air induction into said air gap toward said worktop;

at least one sheath made of a flexible material diffusing a sterile air stream in a vertical direction substantially perpendicular to said worktop, said sheath being formed of a quasi-leaktight upper wall and of a porous lower wall made of a perforated flexible material, extending longitudinally along an axis of said sheath and delimiting between them a sterile air supply duct, and said end of the sheath being formed by a porous wall made of a perforated flexible material;

at least two skirts which extend vertically toward the worktop and which constitute a means of diffusion of sterile air at high velocity relative to the porous lower longitudinal wall of said sheath which diffuses the sterile air at low velocity;

at least one ventilation nozzle arranged on a longitudinal edge of said worktop, able to produce directed toward said products a sterile air stream in a horizontal general direction substantially parallel to said worktop, said ventilation nozzle including at its outlet an air diffuser made of perforated material comprising upper and lower parts which produce an anti-inductive air flow whose velocity of diffusion exhibits a component normal to said worktop, said ventilation nozzle being disposed at an extremity of said device; and

a vertical end skirt disposed at a junction with said ventilation nozzle and extending in a plane perpendicular to the planes of the at least two skirts, said vertical end skirt directed toward said worktop up to a determined distance therefrom so as to permit the passage of said products under said vertical end skirt, and

wherein each longitudinal end of the quasi-leaktight upper longitudinal wall of said sheath is constituted by a corresponding one of said at least two skirts,

wherein the at least two skirts are of substantially the same length and extend up to in immediate proximity of said worktop.